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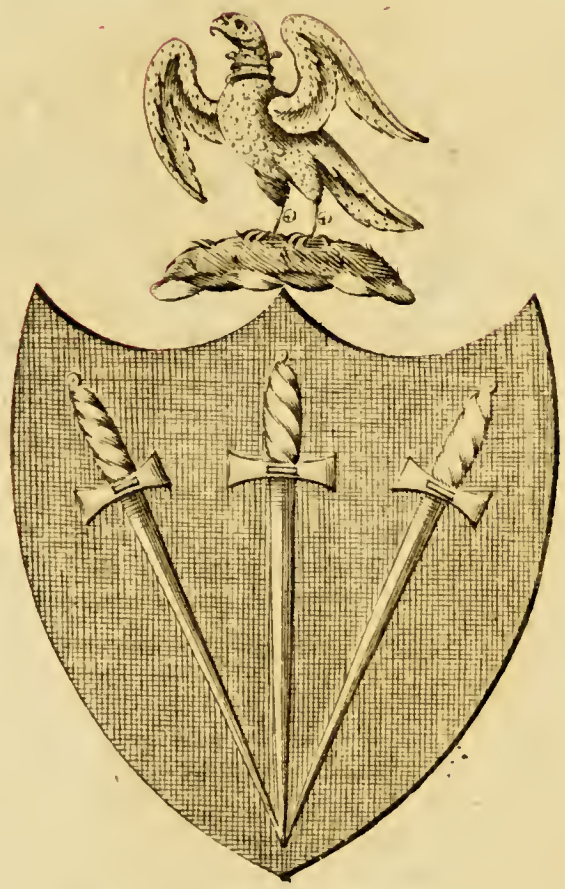

William Powlett Powlett.

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A

WORD in TIME

TO

BOTH HOUSES

OF

PARLIAMENT;

RECOMMENDED TO

The Peruſal of each Member, before he either ſpeaks, or votes,

FOR OR AGAINST A

MILITIA-BILL:

And not improper to be read by all thoſe Gentlemen in the Country, who are deſirous to form a juſt Idea of this important Affair.

By a Member of Neither Houſe.

LONDON:

Printed for R. GRIFFITHS, in Pater-noſter-Row.

MDCCLVII.

A

WORD in TIME, &c.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

MY firſt Deſign was to addreſs you, Cap in Hand, with an Air of obſequious Solemnity; to have begun by aſſuring you, that I was, by no means, to be ranked with the common Herd of Pamphleteers; that, from my Situation in Life, I had a Right to claim your Attention; and that, ſo diſintereſted were my Deſigns, that I had no Object in View, ſave the Publick Weal, and the permanent Felicity of my King and Fellow-Sub-

jects. This was my firſt Plan; but, upon ſecond Thoughts, conſidering that you have already, in this Manner, been too often taken in, and that *old Birds are not eaſily caught with Chaff*, I have concluded that it will better anſwer my Purpoſe to deal plainly and openly with you. Know then, that I *am intereſted*, and greatly intereſted too: Not for, or againſt, the Militia-Bill, but with my Bookſeller, who is to allow me a Guinea for ſcribbling a Pamphlet on this Subject; for I am, alas! a Scribbler by Profeſſion. But now, having been ſo uncommonly ingenuous on my Part, I have a Right to expect an equal Degree of Impartiality from you. I, therefore, as you are Gentlemen, inſiſt that you will inſtantly forget *what I am*, and attend only to *what I ſay*. Thoſe among you who have been at Rome, may, now and then, have found Things worth reading, daub'd againſt an ugly, mutila-

ted, Statue; and ſuch of you as have been converſant, tho' but a little, in low Life, muſt recollect, ſometimes, to have heard important Truth break its Way through the Lips of a Beggar. If you are, therefore, the impartial Men, of which a Britiſh Parliament ought only to conſiſt, I expect that you will proceed, with Attention, to the End of my Pamphlet: For I cannot help ſaying, that there is a Duty incumbent on you, which obliges you to have read every Thing wrote on ſo important a Subject.

In what Dreſs this famous Bill will, this Year, ſhew itſelf, as I am no Prophet, is impoſſible for me to tell. Its laſt Year's Appearance you all of you recollect; and therefore it were now unneceſſary to lay it before you. If I remember right, the Rock on which it ſplit, was the conteſted Point, whether the King, or the People, ſhould nomi-

nate the chief Commanders: For (ſay they on the Country Side of the Queſtion) if the King is to have the Nomination of the principal Officers, it will be giving him a greater Power than ever was veſted in any of his Predeceſſors, which, in future Times, may endanger our Liberty; whilſt thoſe who ſtand up for the Crown, reply, that, by giving that Power to the People, the Prerogative of the Crown will be greatly endangered. The Difficulty of ſettling this important Point, I am informed, was the chief Reaſon why the Bill did not paſs into a Law. It is indeed a very important Point, and I fear will be as difficult to ſettle now as before; for no good Subject will attempt to endanger the Royal Prerogative, or, with open Eyes, to riſque the Liberties of the People; one of which, I am apprehenſive, muſt be the Caſe, which Way ſoever it may be determined.

I have

I have heard ſome of the Sticklers in favour of this new Scheme (for Sticklers there will be in favour of every new Scheme) point out the Militia of Switzerland as an Example worthy our Imitation. Being a Man of few Words, except when I am paid by the Sheet, I ſeldom made any Reply; but I could not help bluſhing, leſt there might be any one preſent, who, per Chance, was acquainted with the Nature of the Swiſs Government, and the Situation of their Country; for all Arguments, in favour of ſuch an Imitation, muſt, of Neceſſity, be drawn from the ſuppoſed Similitude between the political Syſtems of the two Nations. They might, with as much Juſtice, compare us with the Chineſe. The Swiſs are not a trading Nation. That they have hitherto preſerved their Liberty, is merely owing to the Nature of their Country; which is ſo extreamly mountainous, and, conſequently, ſo de-

defended by narrow Paſſes, that the moſt inſignificant Force would ſoon deſtroy the moſt numerous Army. As they are a prolifick People; as the inhabitable Part of their Dominions are but ſmall; and as their Manufactures are by no means ſufficient to employ their Natives: They, therefore, are under an abſolute Neceſſity of diſpoſing of them, in the Service of foreign Princes; and for this Reaſon they find it neceſſary to keep up a martial Spirit among the People, that they may, the more eaſily, be perſuaded to embrace the Profeſſion of Arms. I thought it neceſſary to be a little explicit upon this Subject, as I have heard ſo many Coffee-houſe Politicians explain themſelves ſo ridiculouſly, in ſpeaking of theſe Matters.

These Militia, or Demi-ſoldiers, are, I am inform'd, to be exerciſed on Sun-

days,

days, after divine Service; but, being a free People, are to be ſubject to no penal Laws. The civil Magiſtrate, only, ſhall have the Power of correcting, fining, or, I ſuppoſe, reprimanding them: Now there is ſomething ſo fooliſh in carrying a Man before Mr. Mayor, becauſe he left his Rank, laugh'd, or was loquacious under Arms, that I cannot help wondering any Gentleman of Spirit will think of being concerned in it. The Reaſon why the Pruſſian Soldiers are ſteadier in their Ranks, and conſequently better Troops than ours, is, that their penal Laws are more ſevere, and more ſpeedily executed. Therefore it is very eaſy to foreſee what kind of Troops theſe Gentlemen Soldiers will make, who are ſubject to no military Law. In ſhort, every Cobler will perform his Exerciſe in what Manner he thinks proper, and the Soldier and Officer will be *hail Fellow well met*. I confeſs, with regard to my own Particular,

I ſhould

I ſhould not be ſorry to have the Experiment tried, as I am perſuaded thoſe Falſtaffians will afford good Diverſion to Spectators. My Father's Taylor in the Country is a Man of much ſheer Wit; and, as he tells me, is reſolved to ſerve his King; and he will, I dare ſay, crack many a dry Joke with the Squire, his Captain. To be ſerious, Gentlemen, you may as well think of carrying an Election without B----y, as of forming an Army worth Sixpence, without penal Laws.

THERE have been ſome few Inſtances in former Times, (though but few) of a Body of Militia being of Service. This I think is one of the Arguments uſed in favour of this Project; but unluckily, we don't conſider that military Diſcipline was then at a great Diſtance from its preſent Perfection; that the Militia had little better than Militia to contend with; that our regular Troops were, at that Time,

very

very little ſuperior to Militia; that the Muſket was yet a very imperfect Inſtrument, and that its Uſes were ſcarce known. Pikes and Swords were eaſily managed, and the uſe of them eaſily taught. But thoſe among you who ſerve in our preſent Army, will inform the reſt, if you are deſirous of Information, that Diſcipline, and the Art of War, are, of late, ſo conſiderably improved, that they may be conſidered as having totally changed their Principles. The whole Strength of a Battalion conſiſts in the Coheſion (if I may uſe the Term) of its Individuals; and their deſtructive Power, in their quick, yet cool Manner of Firing. Now, the Gentlemen of the Army will inform you, that, to teach a large Body of Men to adhere in ſuch a Manner as to bear being evoluted, without diſuniting into various Shapes, Aſpects, and Situations, ſo as to bend to every Emergency, and alſo, to load and

fire expeditiouſly, yet coolly and effectually, are with ſo much Difficulty attained, that nothing leſs than an uninterrupted, daily Exerciſe, penal Laws, ſevere Diſcipline, military Authority, and Subordination, can poſſibly accompliſh.

'WELL, but (ſay the Projectors of this 'patriot Scheme) tho' we ſhould grant 'that our Irregulars may be greatly infe-'rior to a ſtanding Army, in point of Diſ-'cipline, yet that, in caſe of an Invaſion, 'they may be of *ſome* Service, will cer-'tainly not be denied.' I aſk you Pardon, Gentlemen Patriots, but it certainly will be denied, and the contrary proved. If indeed you could prevail upon the French to promiſe faithfully, that whenſoever they think proper to invade your Iſland, they will only tranſport their own Militia; then, I confeſs, that the Beef and Pudding in the Belly of undiſciplin'd *John*, will probably prove too many for the

the Soop-meagre of *Monſieur Jean*; and that even a Fur Gown may ſtand a Chance to gather Laurels in the Field of Battle. If you could alſo perſuade them to leave their Arms behind them, engaging, on your Part, to do the ſame, it would contribute greatly to your Proſpect of Succeſs: For, I am ſure, we ſhould out-box them, to a Man. This I would the more eagerly recommend, as I am afraid, if you ſhould take your Fire-arms along with you, that John in the Rear will be firing his Piece into the Back-ſide of his Friend Tom in the Front; or, which would be ſtill worſe, blow out the Brains of his noble Captain. To ſome of your intrepid Patriots and Heroes, who are reſolved, *dam-me!* to fight, Blood to the Knees, in Defence of their Lives, Wives, and Properties, theſe may ſeem Conſiderations of no Importance: Not but it muſt vex a Man, how fond ſoever he may be of lying in the Bed of Honour, to be

ſhot in the Back; leſt peradventure, the Ball not happening to pierce quite through his Body, might give Grounds for Suſpicion of his having taken the Poet's Advice in endeavouring to preſerve himſelf for another Day's Fight; which would prove a terrible Blot in the Family Eſcutcheon---But the Dangers to which you are about to expoſe yourſelves are infinite.

Ah me! what Perils do environ
The Man that meddles with cold Iron!

Serioufly, Gentlemen, I aſſure you, that a Firelock, with a Bayonet fixed on the End of it, is a very aukward Kind of an Inſtrument; and that it requires more Dexterity than you may be aware of, to manage it, without wounding your Neighbours. Many and frequent are the Accidents of this Sort, which happen even among regular Troops, at common Exerciſe; and

yet

yet many more in the Day of Battle. What therefore may be expected from half-diſciplined Men, I need not inform you. Aſk any of thoſe Officers who have been in Battle, and they will tell you, that, without the greateſt Care imaginable, they would have run as much Riſk of being killed by their own People, as by the Enemy. As to my own Part, I declare, that I had rather be ſent on a *forlorn Hope* with regular Troops, than be obliged to continue in the Ranks with Militia, for the obvious Reaſons abovementioned: Reaſons which, one would think, ought to be of Weight with Gentlemen of Fortune.

If it ſhould be preſumed, that your having a National Militia, would diſcourage the French from attempting an Invaſion, I anſwer, that it would certainly be found to be a falſe Preſumption; that it is the only Means to encourage

courage an Invaſion. The French are too well acquainted with the Inſignificancy of ſuch Troops, to be in the leaſt afraid of them: Nay, I am convinced, that they moſt heartily wiſh to hear that this patriot Scheme may take Place; in hopes that you will one Day neglect your ſtanding Army, and depend, for your Security, on your own broken Staff. Nothing would give them greater Pleaſure, as nothing you can undertake will ſo precipitately and effectually render your Power inſignificant, and ruin your Trade: But of that anon.

'HOLD, Sir, ſay they: You miſtake 'our Intention. It is, by no Means, our 'Deſign to reduce the Number of 18,000 'regular Troops, in Great Britain.—I muſt again beg your Pardon, Gentlemen, for taking the Liberty to ſay, that I am afraid you have planned this Affair without giving yourſelves ſufficient Time for

Re-

Reflexion: For, if you had thought, but ever ſo little, you muſt inevitably have ſeen into the irreconcileable Incompatibility between a regular Army, and, what you are pleaſed to call a regular Militia, that will always oppoſe their joint Exiſtence in the ſame Kingdom. They are two Weights ſuſpended at oppoſite Ends of the ſame Beam; as one riſes, the other muſt neceſſarily ſink. The firſt, tho' leaſt Inconveniency that will appear, is the inceſſant Quarrels that will unavoidably happen between thoſe *Property* Soldiers, and the King's Troops, whereſoever the latter are quartered: For, notwithſtanding a thouſand Orders from their Officers, it will be impoſſible to command, or reſtrain, the riſible Muſcles of a diſciplined Soldier, whenever he happens to be a Spectator of the truly comic Scene, which a Battalion of Militia will always afford. I know nothing which Mankind generally bear with ſo little

Pa-

Patience, as Ridicule; the Conſequence therefore is obvious. The regular Troops, conſcious of their Superiority, will deſpiſe and play upon the Militia; who, alſo, from a Senſibility of their own Imperfection, will inveterately hate the Army: For, I dare ſay, Gentlemen, there are many among you, who need not be told how natural it is for us to hate thoſe, of whoſe ſuperior Excellence in our own Way, we are conſcious.

But the evil Conſequences of theſe Animoſities will not terminate here. Leſs than the Sagacity of a Senator would be ſufficient to trace the Stream, from its Fountain, down to the Sea of Troubles, into which it muſt finally carry us. Not to mention the diſagreeable, very diſagreeable, Situation in which thoſe Gentlemen would ſoon find themſelves, who would be conſtantly applied to, in order to decide

Quar-

Quarrels and puniſh Offenders; I believe it will be ſufficient to conſider, for a Moment, what muſt naturally happen whenever there ſhall be a Neceſſity for theſe regular, or irregular, Armies to act in Conjunction; and, even a Moment's Conſideration will diſcover, that they will either refuſe to act in Conjunction, or, at moſt, act in ſo feeble a Manner, as to give their Enemy an Opportunity of deſtroying them both; for there would be ſcarce a Man, in either of theſe Armies, that would not have a Pleaſure in ſeeing the other beat. I am even far from being convinced, that many of thoſe Patriots would not join the French, for the Sake of revenging themſelves on the King's Army. At leaſt I know that it is nothing new, to ſee Men ſacrifice every Thing to private Pique. But, admitting that their Enmity to a foreign Foe would out-weigh their Diſlike to the King's Troops,

which I think improbable, I dare affirm, that, ſhould Mr. Charles Stewart, or any of his Deſcendants, take it into their Heads to pay us a Viſit, by much the greater Part of your Militia would repair to his Standard, merely for the Satisfaction of humbling the regular Army; and, on this Conſideration, if he has but Patience to wait till you have, in ſome Degree, diſciplined his Troops for him, I will venture to aſſure him Succeſs; nay, I will even advance one Step farther, and aſſure you, that, as ſoon as he is informed that his Army is ready, he will actually land; for, under whatſoever Degree of Family-Weakneſs he may labour, he is not ſo great a Fool, as to overlook ſo plain a Road to a Crown.

I believe, Gentlemen, I have opened a new Scene, to ſome of you. You who projected this Militia-Scheme, probably,

bably, did not ſuſpect that you would be accuſed of contriving Means to bring in the Pretender; nor do I in Truth, accuſe you of any ſuch Intention: But then I think you are fairly reduced to confeſs yourſelves extreamly ſhort-ſighted. Now there are many Men in the World who had rather be reputed Knaves than Fools.

My Lords and Gentlemen:

If there be any among you who are too ſtrongly prejudiced in favour of their firſt Opinion, to be convinced by plain Reaſoning, let me intreat them to accompany me, in Idea, for a Moment, to America. Sorry I am to ſay, that there, I ſhall have it in my Power to convince them, by recent Facts, that there is no Dependence on irregular Troops, and that nothing but Confuſion is to be expected from their attempting to act in Conjunction with a diſciplined

Army. Is there a Member of either Houſe, who does not now ſee, that all our Diſappointments and Diſaſters, in that Part of the World, are entirely owing to our injudicious Dependence on irregular Troops? If, at the firſt, we had ſent a ſufficient Number of diſciplined Forces, we ſhould have ſaved an infinite Sum of Money; and Things would have wore a very different Aſpect.

The Truth of what I ſay will appear more evident, when you find that, as ſoon as the Seaſon will permit, notwithſtanding the many fine Projects of the native Americans to defend themſelves, we ſhall be obliged to tranſport a conſiderable Number of regular Troops to ſupport them: Which if we omit to do, we muſt infallibly loſe every Foot of Land of which we are now in Poſſeſſion. In ſhort, you may lay it down

as

as an indiſputable Maxim, that, *when you are attacked by regular Troops, nothing but regular Troops are fit to oppoſe them.*

I own, there is ſomething very plauſible, and popular (particularly, if the Speaker is careful to fix himſelf in a proper Attitude, with his right Hand cloſe preſſed to his Heart) in bawling out the Words, *conſtitutional Liberty!*—*able, and willing, to defend our King, our Country, our Wives, our Children, our Property, and every thing that is dear to us!--laſt Drop of Blood!*--with a pathetic, *Dulce et decorum eſt pro Patria mori*, &c. This is all very pretty, and very fine; but it is, at the ſame Time, all Theory, and all Chimera.

The very Argument uſed to perſuade us that theſe Soldiers of Property will fight *better* than common Soldiers, is a very

ſtrong

ſtrong preſumption that they will fight *worſe*. That Anxiety which, it is preſumed, would ſpur them on to Action, would, much more probably, ſerve only to increaſe their Fear, and deſtroy that calm Reſolution ſo neceſſary in an Engagement. That an honeſt Country-Gentleman ſhould form his Idea of a Battle from the confuſed Picture in his great Hall, is not in the leaſt wonderful; nor is it at all ſurpriſing that, there ſeeing every Man fight for himſelf, he ſhould conclude, that Rage and Fury are the only Virtues requiſite in a Soldier: But the King of Pruſſia, or the Duke of Cumberland (if he will allow them to be proper Judges) will inform him, that Patience is frequently of greater Uſe in an Engagement than Courage; that the Loſs of many a Battle has been entirely owing to an ungovernable Impatience in the Troops to fall upon their Enemy; that the chief Deſign of all Military Diſcipline is to

bring

bring the private Men to act, in a Manner, like ſo many Machines, moved only by the Command of their Officers; and that, notwithſtanding the great Influence of penal Laws, abſolute Subordination, and daily Exerciſe, it is yet found the moſt difficult Thing in the World to bring an Army to this. And yet we are now for diſciplining an Army without Puniſhment, without Subordination, and without Exerciſe. I wonder no one ever propoſed a Scheme to blow Soldiers as they do Glaſs-Bottles: It would certainly coſt leſs Money, and be of as much Service.

But let us ſuppoſe, notwithſtanding all this, that ſome People's Obſtinacy ſhould get the better both of their Reaſon and Opponents; that the Bill ſhould actually paſs, and be vigorouſly carried into Execution. As we are to continue our uſual Number of regular Troops,

Troops, in caſe of an Invaſion, I ſuppoſe the chief Command of the whole would be veſted in whatever Captain-General ſhould then happen to be at the Head of the regular Army; which, in all Probability, would be a Prince of the Blood. Now the firſt Step which the Chieftains of the Militia muſt take, would be, to ſend to know his Highneſs's Commands.

But how great would be their Surprize, when their Meſſenger returned with an Anſwer to the following Effect:

'I thank you for your kind Offer of 'Aſſiſtance. Tho' my Army is but 'ſmall, I hope we ſhall be a Match for 'our Enemy. All the Service you can 'poſſibly be of to me, is to lurk in 'the neighbouring Villages, in order to 'pick up Fugitives after the Battle.'

Upon the Receipt off ſo contemptuous an Anſwer, you immediately call a Coun-

cil

cil of War, and like ſo many Draw-cancers, reſolve, at once, to deſtroy both Friend and Foe.

From what I have ſaid, I preſume, it is ſufficiently evident, that your Militia will anſwer no Purpoſe. One ſingle Regiment of Foot, with two Troops of Dragoons, would, in leſs than five Minutes, diſperſe them all. Your 70, or 80,000 Pounds, which, I think, you purpoſe annually to expend, would be entirely thrown away. Though that Sum would maintain but a ſmall Number of regular Troops, yet I am convinced that it would pay a Number, ſmall as it is, capable of defending your Property better than all the Militia you could poſſibly raiſe.

Your Scheme is, at leaſt, a Century too late. It might have done in Days

of Yore. Caſt but your Eyes around you, and you will ſee all Europe regularly under Arms, even in Time of Peace. The whole Syſtem is entirely changed. Need I tell you, that there is ſcarce a petty Prince upon the Continent who is not obliged to maintain an Army of 8, or 10,000 Men; and that for no other Reaſon than becauſe his Neighbours do the ſame. It is the Humour of the Times: And, believe me, we muſt comply with it, or we ſhall feel the ill Effects of our Obſtinacy.

But tho' it were in your Power to refute every Argument I have hitherto uſed, there remains yet another Conſideration, which, one would imagine, were alone ſufficient to determine every true Briton againſt the Scheme in Queſtion. I mean, our TRADE. Pleaſe to pauſe here, noble Lords, and Gentlemen, and reflect a little---

And now let me aſk you, whether you do not plainly foreſee, that, by endeavouring to make Soldiers of your Manufacturers, you will render them much more profligate, and, conſequently, more idle, than they now are? Is there a Lord, or Commoner, of you all, who is ſo little acquainted with human Nature as not to foreſee, that as ſoon as Giles the Weaver has been taught to poiſe his Firelock, he will conclude himſelf a compleat Soldier; and that he will do his utmoſt to imitate the Army in thoſe Vices by which alone he has been uſed to diſtinguiſh its Members from the reſt of Mankind, and which even conſtitute his whole Idea of a military Man. From the very Moment he is enrolled, he imagines himſelf metamorphoſed, and that an entire Change of Manners

is the neceſſary Conſequence. His firſt Ambition is to curſe and ſwear like a Soldier: Then he muſt drink like a Soldier: He muſt alſo whore like a Soldier. In ſhort, honeſt Giles, who was one of the ſobereſt Church-goers in the whole Pariſh, in a very ſhort Time becomes an idle, drunken, profligate Fellow. That this is no groundleſs Conjecture, may be evidently proved from the Notion which the common People, in general, entertain of a military Man. Every Officer who has had any Experience in Recruiting, will inform you, that moſt of thoſe Men who enter the Service, are ſo ſtrongly prepoſſed in this Opinion, that, were they not reſtrained by penal Laws, executed with the ſtricteſt Severity, from being grave, ſober, ſedate Lads, they would inſtantly be ſufficient to corrupt the Army itſelf. I believe, after what I have,

have ſaid, it would be needleſs to draw any Concluſion with regard to the Effects which this Project would have in a manufacturing Country.

In ſpeaking of our Manufactures, there occurs to me a Thing of much more Importance to the Nation, and, conſequently, more deſerving of your Attention, than the Militia Bill. It is indeed ſomewhat foreign to my Subject; but a very few Words will ſuffice, and therefore I ſhall make no Apology for introducing it. Such of you as have lately traverſed the Continent, muſt know, that moſt of the foreign Princes have, within theſe few Years, been endeavouring to eſtabliſh, in their ſeveral Dominions, various Manufactures, particularly thoſe with which they have hitherto been ſupplied from this Kingdom. The Conſequence of this muſt naturally be, that as

ſoon

ſoon as they are arrived at a ſufficient Degree of Perfection to under-ſell us, we muſt gradually loſe our foreign Correſpondence: And the gradual Deprivation of that which gave us our Power, muſt gradually decreaſe it. Now, I humbly apprehend, My Lords and Gentlemen, that it would be well worth your while to conſider of Ways and Means to prevent a fatal Evil, which, if not prevented, muſt ſoon fall upon you. This from what I know of the Matter, can be no otherwiſe effected, but by favouring your manufacturing Parts of the Kingdom, ſo as to enable them to work cheaper, and in conſequence of that, to under-ſell our Neighbours. The Duties from which they ought to be exempt are, naturally, ſuch as immediately affect the Manufacturer. I own it would, in ſome Degree, leſſen the Revenue, which, at this Juncture, might poſſibly be thought im-

improper; but then I am of Opinion, it might be laid on where it would be leſs ſenſibly felt.——But to reſume my Thread, that I may methodically finiſh with the Subject with which I began.——

And now, Gentlemen, let me aſk you ſeriouſly, what you think would have enſued from thoſe Commotions which have lately happened, in various Parts of the Kingdom, on account of the Price of Corn, in caſe thoſe Mutineers had been ſupplied with Arms, and had, in any Degree, been taught the Uſe of them? You will anſwer me, perhaps, 'That, 'according to your Scheme, the Men are 'only to be intruſted with their Arms on 'Sundays, and that immediately after 'Exerciſe, they are to be depoſited in 'the Houſe of ſome Magiſtrate.' But I would then aſk you, what Power you will

will contrive ſufficient to hinder them from forcibly entering the Place where their Arms are depoſited, and from uſing them when, and in what Manner, they ſhall think proper?

Upon my Word, Gentlemen, it is aſtoniſhing, that any Man in his Senſes ſhould ever think of ſuch a Scheme, in a Nation ſo unhappily ſubject to Inſurrection.---'Well,' ſay you, 'but the People 'in general are bent upon a National Mi-'litia.'---Who put it into their Heads? But tho' they are bent upon it, will you, their Repreſentatives, acquieſce in a Thing which will evidently be productive of ſo many bad Conſequences, rather than give yourſelves the Trouble to convince them of their Error? For the Sake of your Country, and your own Credit, let me perſuade you to drop a Project, from which you will reap no other Fruit, than

that

that of being laugh'd at by every ſenſible Man in the Nation. I have the Honour to be

Noble Lords, and Gentlemen,

Your moſt obedient,

and humble Servant,

NOBODY.

POSTSCRIPT.

SINCE I wrote the above, I found, by Accident, among other Papers, a Pamphlet which I had entirely forgotten, bearing this Title: *A Treatiſe concerning the Militia, in four Sections.* 1ſt, *Of the Militia in general.* 2d, *Of the Roman Militia.* 3d, *The proper Plan of a Militia, for this Country.* 4th, *Obſervations upon this Plan. By C. S.*---Who this Mr. C. S. may be, I neither know nor care; but I ſincerely wiſh that every Man in the Nation, who is an Advocate for the Militia-Bill, may take the Trouble to read his Pamphlet. It muſt be the Work of ſome great Man; for he tells us, in his Preface, that, 'at the Time

'he wrote it, he had the Honour to attend 'upon the Perſon of the beſt, and moſt 'truly patriot Prince, that (he believes) e-'ver adorned, or bleſt any Country in the 'World;' who (he alſo informs us) 'in-'tended many excellent Regulations for 'the Happineſs of England.'---If this Militia-Scheme, according to his Plan, was one of his *intended excellent Regulations*, I cannot help congratulating my Country, that an effectual Bar was put to his carrying it into Execution.

LEST the Reader ſhould run away with this laſt Sentence, without properly conſidering it, it may be adviſeable to remind him, that notwithſtanding his perſonal Affection to any Prince whatever, if he ſhould know that ſuch Prince intended to execute any Scheme which he (the Reader) believed would be the Cauſe of Deſtruction to his Country, it is his Duty, as well as mine, to wiſh the *Removal* of

that

that Prince. The Truth of this may have required no Explanation to many Readers; but really thoſe who are obliged to converſe much with Mankind, muſt have been too often mortified with their general Stupidity, not to ſee the frequent Neceſſity of explaining the moſt obvious Truths.

But to return to his Lordſhip, I would ſay, Mr. C. S.---He alſo tells us, that the Prince did him the Honour to approve of his Scheme, in many Converſations which he had with him upon it: I am ſorry they could find no better Subject; and cannot help owning my Surpriſe, that their Converſations were productive of no better a Plan. In Truth it is ſuch an old-faſhioned *Buſineſs*, that, had it not been for its Date, in the Title-page, I ſhould have concluded it written in the Reign of good Queen Beſs, at the lateſt.

OUR Author's firſt Section tends chiefly to ſhew, from trite thread-bare Examples in Hiſtory, (ſuch as Cæſar, Cromwell, &c.) the Danger of a ſtanding Army to the Liberty of this Nation. He confeſſes, indeed, 'that the Exiſtence of 'a ſtanding Army is annual, and depends 'upon the Will of Parliament.'---If he had intended to perſuade the People into a Fear of loſing their darling Liberty, he had better have paſſed over this Circumſtance in Silence: but then, ſays he, tho' the Parliament have this Power, 'if the 'People ſhould refuſe to continue the 'Troops in Pay, no Man *alive* can be-'lieve that they will quietly diſband them-'ſelves.'—I own there are ſome, who, though they are *alive*, yet being unhappily deprived of the Power of Recollection, may be very hard of *Belief*; but I am firmly of Opinion, that a Man, *alive*, and in his perfect Senſes, may remember

that

that at the Concluſion of a War, it has always been the Cuſtom to break, and diſband, the greateſt Part of our ſtanding Army, and that without any Apprehenſion of Danger in the People. Is not, therefore, the Army in the Power of the People, and do they not exert that Power, even without the leaſt Oppoſition from the Army? What, therefore, is your Army, in effect, but a regular Militia? Are they not a Part of the People, paid by the People, and reduced, and diſbanded, at the Pleaſure of the People? What the D--- would the *People* have more?

I CANNOT poſſibly take Leave of this Section, without acknowledging my Acquieſcence as to that Part of it, where the Author is of Opinion, that a National Militia would be the only Means to get rid of Smugglers and Highwaymen. I am entirely of his Way of thinking. It would

would certainly be the propereſt, and only Uſe you could put them to.

SECTION the 2d, *(of the Roman Militia)* was ſolely intended for the Uſe of Schools, and does not contain one ſingle Word relative to the Subject: for, the Times and Conſtitution of the Romans bear no more Reſemblance to ours, than did the Brains of Sir Iſaac Newton to thoſe of this Author—the one having been a Mathematician, and the other being a Politician.

THE 3d Sect. which conſiſts of a *proper Plan of a Militia*, is ſo very entertaining, that I would adviſe every one to read it for his Amuſement. I had ſuppoſed that the Militia were to be exerciſed, at leaſt, once a Week; but I find our Author thinks once a Month ſufficient to make Soldiers of them. I dare ſay he has ſeen many an Army in his Time.

Time. A fine old Grecian, I warrant him. The eighth Article of his Plan runs thus: 'Neither the general Militia, nor 'the County Regiments, or any Part of 'them, ſo as to make a Body of armed 'Men, to march out of their reſpective 'Counties UPON ANY PRETEXT, OR BY 'ANY COMMAND WHATSOEVER; upon 'Pain of being declared Enemies to their 'Country, and guilty of High-Treaſon.'

Now, leſt any of my Readers, not having a political Turn, ſhould be at a Loſs as to the Intent of this Article, I will explain it. The Deſign of it was, in caſe your Enemies chuſe to invade you, to enable them to complete their Conqueſt without Let, Hindrance, or Moleſtation, at the ſmall Expence of ſending over one or two Regiments only. Our Militia are to remain in their reſpective Counties, to the Intent that one Corps may not aſſiſt another; but that the Militia

of each County may receive one ſeparate Fire from the Enemy, and ſo run home. For the Author wiſely conſidered, in caſe the Militia of the whole Nation were aſſembled into one Army, that then one ſingle Fire from the French would do for them all; but by obliging your Enemy to fire as many Times as there are Counties, you put them to a much greater Expence, by increaſing their Conſumption of Powder. This it is to be a Politician!

Perchance, noble Lords, and Gentlemen, upon conſidering this Matter ſeriouſly, you may think, that an Author, having propoſed a Plan, containing an Article plainly tending to facilitate the Conqueſt of our Enemies over us, ought himſelf to be accuſed of High-Treaſon. But I aſſure you, from my Peruſal of his Book, I have obtained ſo thorough a Knowledge of what he is capable, that I dare

dare affirm it to be entirely the Effect of a very innocent Cauſe. Beſides, were you to look upon the Thing in this Light, it might poſſibly involve too many worthy Gentlemen in Difficulties; as all thoſe who favour this National Militia, will be found, in reality, though perhaps, not intentionally, to be equally culpable.

THE fourth Section contains nothing more than a few inſignificant Obſervations on the foregoing Plan.

UPON the Whole, after reading carefully over every Thing that has lately been wrote in favour of this Militia-Scheme, I cannot help declaring, that it is the wildeſt, and moſt ill-concerted Project that ever was formed in this Nation. In the firſt Place, it will be found impracticable; and, ſecondly, even ſuppoſing it poſſible to be carried

into Execution, will be by no means ſufficient to anſwer the End propoſed.

By the laſt Year's Plan, ſome Part of the People were to be exerciſed every Sunday; but they were to be aſſembled in whole Regiments only once a Year. That any Man, who has ever ſeen an Army, ſhould imagine that this would be ſufficient to make Soldiers! Is it poſſible to conceive, that theſe Civil-Military Gentlemen ſhould be ſo extreamly ignorant of their new, favourite, Profeſſion, as not to know that the neceſſary Evolutions, and Firings, practiſed in Battalion, are entirely different from what is practiſed in the training of ſingle Ranks, or Companies, and cannot poſſibly be taught but by frequently aſſembling the Whole? Not but, in the main, it may be prudent to expoſe the Field-Officers as ſeldom as poſſible

to

to the Deriſion of the Spectators: For how can it be ſuppoſed that theſe honeſt Gentlemen ſhould know what to do with a Battalion after it is drawn up? In the Standing Army it is found neceſſary, even to inſtruct the Subalterns, to have Field-Days two or three Times a Week.

I am far from diſputing the Capacity of theſe Heroes; but I think, that Inſtinct will hardly teach them what others are not able to attain without Practice. I ſhould be glad to aſk thoſe Colonels and Majors, what they think would be the Conſequence, in caſe they were attacked by an Enemy? Can they reaſonably expect that any thing but Confuſion would enſue, in a Jumble of undiſciplined People, whoſe very Officers can hardly be ſuppoſed to know any thing of their Duty?

One

One very remarkable Thing in this Bill is, that no Man is to ſerve in the Militia more than three Years at a Time: So that, as the Whole are raiſed together, at the Expiration of three Years, you will have an entire Army of freſh Men to be inſtructed from the very Beginning. Nor will you ever at any Time have one Man in the whole Number who has ſeen more than two or three Field Days. Good God! that any Gentleman who expects to be thought a rational Being, ſhould ſuppoſe that ſuch an Army can be of any Service in theſe Days!

There is a Plan that would anſwer every End propoſed by the Bill in Queſtion, and which is attended with none of thoſe Inconveniences. It is this.

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